

SENSITIVE

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SITUATION(S) MESSAGE(S) LISTING

DATE 06/20/74//171

SITUATION: HAK TRIP  
 SUBJECT CATEGORY: TOHAK III

MESSAGE / ANNOTATION:

MESSAGE:

IMMEDIATE  
 OO WTEIR  
 DE WTE #3882 1661626  
 O 151626Z JUN 74  
 FM THE SITUATION ROOM//TOHAK 107//  
 TO PETER RODMAN FOR GEN SCOWCROFT  
 LES JANKA FOR RON ZIEGLER  
 ZEM  
 UNCLAS WH41939

TOHAK 107

STAR-NEWS 6-15-74

RICHARD WILSON: "WATERGATE HAS GONE TOO FAR"

AS IN MOST HUMAN AFFAIRS, THINGS WILL NEVER BE QUITE THE SAME AFTER THE EMOTIONAL EXPLOSION OF HENRY A. KISSINGER. HIS THREAT TO RESIGN AS SECRETARY OF STATE IF HIS "HONOR" IS NOT SUSTAINED MUST BE TAKEN VERY SERIOUSLY IF ONLY BECAUSE, ONCE INJECTED INTO PUBLIC DEBATE, THIS IDEA MAY DEVELOP A SELF-PROPELLING CHARACTER.

THAT WOULD BE AN APPALLING CONSEQUENCE OF THE WATERGATE MADNESS. ITS PROSPECT TENDS TO CRYSTALLIZE THE VIEW SHARED BY AN

INCREASING NUMBER THAT WATERGATE HAS GONE TOO FAR IF IT DRIVES TO

DISTRACTION A BRILLIANT DIPLOMATIC STRATEGIST AND NEGOTIATOR WITH KISSINGER'S ACKNOWLEDGED ACHIEVEMENTS.

KISSINGER CERTAINLY HAD IN MIND DRAMATIZING THAT POINT IN MIND DRAMATIZING THE POINT IN HIS EMOTION-LADEN PRESS CONFERENCE IN SALZBURG, BUT TO JUDGE HIS ACTION AS A TACTIC IN CONFRONTATION POLITICS SERIOUSLY UNDERESTIMATES THE GRAVITY WITH WHICH THE PROBLEM OUGHT TO BE VIEWED.

WATERGATE HAS, IN FACT, GONE TOO FAR. IT IS UNDERMINING STABLE GOVERNMENT AND CONSTRUCTIVE POLICY. IT MUST BE BROUGHT TO A CONCLUSION WITHOUT DELAY.

AND SO KISSINGER'S TENSE ULTIMATUM WAS FAR FROM SILLY, BUT

\*\*\*\*\* WHSR COMMENTS \*\*\*\*\*

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A BOLD EXPRESSION OF A CONVICTION WHICH HAS BEEN BEARING IN ON HIM FOR MONTHS THAT LARGE AFFAIRS CANNOT BE CONDUCTED IN A CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE WHICH IS CONTINUOUSLY EXTENDED DAY AFTER DAY.

INFERENCES, INNUENDO, ACCUSATIONS CONSTANTLY REPEATED, NEVER PROVED OR DISPROVED AND SUBJECT TO CONTINUOUS INTERPRETATION AND REINTERPRETATION, HAVE CREATED A POISONOUS ATMOSPHERE SUFFOCATING WASHINGTON.

IN THE NEXT COUPLE OF WEEKS, THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WILL REVIEW THE KISSINGER CASE AND PROBABLY COME OUT WHERE IT WAS IN THE FIRST PLACE. THE COMMITTEE HAD EVIDENCE FROM THE BEGINNING FROM WHICH A PROSECUTOR'S MIND COULD DRAW INFERENCE THAT KISSINGER DID MORE THAN MERELY GO ALONG IN A NIXON-APPROVED WIRETAPPING PROJECT TO FIND THE SOURCE OF NATIONAL SECURITY LEAKS WHICH WERE COMPROMISING SECRET INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS AND ACTIONS.

IN ITS 15-1 VOTE FOR KISSINGER'S CONFIRMATION, THE COMMITTEE IN EFFECT DECIDED TO SUBORDINATE SUCH INFERENCES TO THE LARGER CONSIDERATION THAT KISSINGER'S GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS OVERWHELMINGLY QUALIFIED HIM TO BE SECRETARY OF STATE.

THE COMMITTEE HAS ALREADY JUDGED THAT WHAT HE TOLD THEM WAS MORE COMPELLING THAN SUCH EVIDENCE AS WAS PROVIDED BY J. EDGAR HOOVER'S RITTEN JUSTIFICATIONS OF FBI ACTION AS ON ORDERS BY KISSINGER. IN ANY CASE, KISSINGER'S INVOLVEMENT WITH WIRETAPS THAT WERE BOTH JUSTIFIABLE AND PRECEDENTED WAS NOT ENOUGH TO DISHONOR HIM.

BUT THE INNUENDOS ARISING FROM UNNAMED SOURCE IN THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE THAT KISSINGER LIED ABOUT HIS INVOLVEMENT REQUIRED KISSINGER TO SAY MORE (AND HE HAS DONE SO). HE WILL APPEAR AGAIN BEFORE THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE TO CONVINCE ITS MEMBERS HE DID NOT LIE TO THEM. THIS IS A COURSE FITTING KISSINGER'S OWN STANDARDS OF HONOR.

THE LARGER QUESTION IS HOW MUCH MORE OF THIS THE COUNTRY CAN STAND, AND IF KISSINGER HAS BROUGHT THAT POINT TO THE FOREFRONT OF PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS HE WILL HAVE DONE A GOOD THING.

BUT THERE IS ALWAYS THE RISK THAT THE WATERGATE MADNESS, MAGNIFYING MINOR DERELICTIONS INTO MONSTROUS CRIMES, WILL IN THE END SUFFOCATE THE MOST BRILLIANT INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATOR OF THIS CENTURY.

THAT WOULD BE A VERY HIGH PENALTY TO PAY FOR ACTS INTENDED TO PREVENT THE SABOTAGE OF AMERICAN POLICY THROUGH LEAKED SECRET INFORMATION.

SEN. GOLDWATER, IS RIGHT. KISSINGER WOULD HAVE BEEN DERELICT IN HIS DUTY IF HE HAD NOT COOPERATED IN USING EVERY LEGAL MEANS TO STOP THE LEAKING OF TOP CLASSIFIED MATERIAL AND HELD THE LEAKERS TO ACCOUNT.

BUT IN THE UPSIDE-DOWN WORLD OF WATERGATE, THE CULPRITS ARE NOT THOSE WHO WERE PASSING OUT CLASSIFIED INFORMATION ON SECRET

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AMERICAN NEGOTIATING POSITIONS IN NUCLEAR ARMS TALKS, BUT THOSE WHO WERE TRYING TO STOP IT. THIS IS WHY IT CANNOT BE EXCLUDED THAT KISSINGER WILL BECOME SO ENSNARED IN EMOTIONAL INTRIGUE THAT HIS THREAT TO RESIGN MAY PROPEL ITSELF INTO A RIDICULOUS FULFILLMENT WHICH WOULD SHAME THOSE WHO WOULD BRING HIM DOWN.

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